REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Appreciation is expressed to Examiner Jaworski for pointing out the inadvertent typographical error in paragraph [0053] of the application. The specification has been amended to adopt the Examiner's helpful suggestion. Also, paragraph [0093] has been deleted. In light of the aforementioned changes, withdrawal of the objection to the disclosure is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 have also been amended without narrowing the claim scope to address the points raised in the bottom half of page three and the top portion of page four of the Official Action. In so doing, the Examiner's suggested changes have been adopted. Thus, those claims now recite that the second proximal end opening portion of the second lumen is provided on the distal end side of a position at the noted distance from the first distal end opening portion of the first lumen toward the proximal end side along the insertion direction. In light of the changes to Claims 1 and 2, withdrawal of the claim rejection based on the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

New dependent Claims 8-16 are presented for consideration. Thus, the claims currently at issue in this application are Claims 1-16, with Claim 1 being the only independent claim.

Claim 1 recites a catheter comprising a sheath main body portion to be inserted into an organism and a sheath distal end portion provided at the distal end portion of the sheath main body portion. A first lumen which is a passage provided in the sheath main body portion has a first axis, and a guide wire for guiding the

sheath main body portion in the organism is adapted to be passed through the first lumen. The first lumen comprises a first distal end opening portion provided on the distal end side in the direction of insertion into the organism and through which the guide wire can be passed, and a first proximal end opening portion provided on the proximal end side and through which the guide wire can be passed. A second lumen different from the first lumen is provided in the sheath distal end portion. The second lumen comprises a second distal end opening portion and a second proximal end opening portion through which a guide wire can be passed, and the second lumen has a second axis different from the first axis. The sheath main body portion also comprises a reinforcing part at a joint portion between the sheath main body portion and the sheath distal end portion. In addition, the second proximal end opening portion of the second lumen is provided on the distal end side of a position at a distance of 60 mm from the first distal end opening portion of the first lumen toward the proximal end side along the insertion direction.

The Official Action sets forth a rejection of independent Claim 1 based on the disclosure contained in U.S. Patent No. 5,976,093 to *Jang*. *Jang* discloses a vascular catheter having a low-profile distal end. The catheter possesses a distal region 54, 120 having a reduced cross-sectional area compared to the proximal region 56, 110. The distal region 54, 120 is provided with a single lumen identified as 58 in the Fig. 3 embodiment and unnumbered in the Fig. 7 embodiment, while the proximal region 56, 110 includes a pair of lumens identified as 64, 66 in the Fig. 3 embodiment and 106, 122 in the Fig. 7 embodiment.

One of the differences between the catheter at issue here and the disclosure in *Jang* is that in the catheter at issue here, the sheath main body portion comprises

a reinforcing part. This reinforcing part is located at the joint portion between the sheath main body portion and the sheath distal end portion. A portion of the first lumen extends through the reinforcing part, and the reinforcing part is provided with the first distal end opening portion through which a guide wire is adapted to be passed. Claim 1 has been amended to recite this distinction which, together with the other claimed features, is not disclosed in *Jang*. Withdrawal of the rejection based on the disclosure in *Jang* is thus respectfully requested.

The Official Action also sets forth a rejection of independent Claim 1 based on a combination of the disclosures contained in *Jang* and U.S. Patent No. 5,531,700 to *Moore et al.* *Moore et al.* discloses a catheter having a distal region 16 and a proximal region 14, with the diameter of the latter being greater than the diameter of the former. The distal region 16 of the catheter includes a single lumen 22 while the proximal region 14 of the catheter is provided with a pair of lumens 18, 20. The distal region 16 also includes a distal guide wire exit port 24 communicating with the lumen 22. A guide wire can be advanced through the lumen 22 and into the distal guide wire exit port 24 to allow the catheter to be used as a short lumen rapid exchange catheter. The proximal region 14 of the catheter can be provided with a proximal guide wire exit port 30 communicating with the lumen 18. A guide wire can be advanced through the lumens 22, 18 and into the proximal guide wire exit port 30 to allow the catheter to be used as a long lumen rapid exchange catheter. Further, if the guide wire is directed entirely through the lumen 18, the catheter is inserted using a conventional over-the-wire technique.

Like the catheter disclosed in *Jang*, the catheter disclosed in *Moore et al.* does not include a reinforcing part located at a joint portion between a sheath main

body portion and a sheath distal end portion as recited in Claim 1. Thus, a combination of the disclosures in *Jang* and *Moore et al.* would not have directed one to construct a catheter having the claimed combination of features recited in Claim 1.

For at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed catheter recited in independent Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the disclosure contained Jang, considered alone or in combination with the disclosure set forth in *Moore et al.*

Claims 2-16 depend from independent Claim 1 and are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent Claim 1. These dependent claims also define further distinguishing characteristics associated with the catheter at issue here. For example, new Claim 8 recites that the sheath distal end portion has a distal end which extends distally beyond a distal end of the sheath main body portion. New Claim 9 depends from Claim 8 and defines that the axial length of the sheath distal end portion is less than the axial length of the sheath main body portion. The catheters described in the applied documents do not include these characteristics.

New dependent Claim 10 recites that the second distal end opening portion is positioned distally of the first distal end opening portion, and new Claim 11 depends from Claim 10 and defines that the axial length of the sheath distal end portion is less than the axial length of the sheath main body portion. Once again, the catheters described in the applied documents do not include these features as claimed.

New Claims 14 and 16 recite define the coil that is located proximally of the reinforcing part. The applied documents do not disclose such a coil together with the other claimed aspects of the catheter.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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